

Volunteers Your festival needs

The Henley Festival is unique in many many ways, but up 'til now one of the lesser known facts about us has been that, unlike almost any other similar organisation in the country, we have not used volunteers to help us in our activities. This could be about to change.

That's not to say that the level of professionalism at Festival events will be sacrificed in any way, rather the aim is to bring in some additional help to further the aims of the charity. At present the work of the Friends is administered almost exclusively by Community Projects Manager, Mandy Beard. But as the amount of work being undertaken by the Friends increases so does the weight on Mandy's shoulders. Given the feeling that the majority of money available from the Friends should be spent

on work rather than on salaries we would like to invite members of the Friends organisation to offer up skills that may be helpful to the work of the Friends. This could take many forms and will not just be relevant to the summer period. If you would like to offer time with event stewarding, general administration, helping with the Friends exhibition space at the festival and other events – or any of the other schemes that we have yet to devise – do let us know. With the first Henley Carnival planned with the inevitable amount of extra work, now is a good time to get involved.

We always value getting to know our Friends but in this way we might move up a gear and become real friends.

If you wish to offer your services, please contact **Mandy Beard** or **Stewart Collins** at the Festival office on 01491 843400.

Stewart Collins
Artistic Director Henley Festival

YOU!



Dancers in Carnival costume from Kinetika, this year's SHOUT! company in residence, lead students from Gillotts School, Henley in a procession.

Throughout the year, schools in the Henley area are taking part in a programme of Carnival Arts towards Henley's Carnival on Sunday 9th July. More inside.



Magic in the sunshine

On a glorious Family Fiesta! day by the river, the SHOUT! year with the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra culminated in a production of 'The Magic Flute' on Henley Festival's floating stage. Under the direction of Mark Withers from Children's Music Workshop and BSO's Andy Baker, 120 students and opera singers Marie Vassiliou (soprano) and John Lofthouse (baritone) performed a children's version of Mozart's opera. GCSE and A level music students played in the orchestra alongside members of the BSO.



There's quite a hum in the town as preparations get underway for Henley's first Carnival next Summer. Kinetika, the London based Carnival Arts company is taking the SHOUT! project to new dimensions with a rich programme of visual arts, costume-making, and performance in local schools this year.



A year of Carnival in Henley

A hugely successful launch day at Gillotts School in September where all participating schools experienced the music and dance of Carnival, has been followed by a series of making and performance workshops and inset days for teachers.



The theme for Henley will be 'A Mas Wedding' taking on customs and rituals from around the world and celebrating the coming together of our community. Chinese imagery will be a major element with a 20' high Dragon groom and Butterfly bride, the wedding guests, symbols of the river, the wedding feast, and of course a lot of drumming. Come and join in the fun on the streets of Henley on Sunday 9th July.

Henley Festival Extra!



Kids@Art Banners

Huge banners telling the story of 'The Magic Flute' were created at Sacred Heart Primary School during the Summer Term and displayed either side of the main stage at the Family Fiesta!

The week-long residency at the school was led by textile artist Judith Gussin from Kids @ Art. The Friends also funded a residency at Gillotts School with Oxford artist Rahima Kenner to produce Indian print fabrics for dance costumes.



COMMISSIONS

As readers of The Muse will recall, after many years of benevolent ticking over, the Friends of Henley Festival embarked on an altogether higher profile series of activities roughly three years ago. With Friends numbers having grown to four figures, funds became available not just to re-invest in the Festival but also to support a variety of other activities consistent with the aims of the charity as set out when the Festival was founded back in 1982.

The SHOUT project has clearly taken the lion's share of these funds but the Friends' Trustees were happy to endorse a general seven point plan, one element of



which was to be the commissioning of new work.

This has taken a number of different forms so far both in the visual and performing arts – the most up front and obvious commission to date tied in with the 2003 Family Fiesta SHOUT performance, Barry Russell's large scale choral piece "Algon and the Star Children". There have also been a number of other 'street' and visual arts projects that have first seen the light of day on the Festival's lawns. This policy is set to be continued as the Festival co-commissions the Hoodwink Theatre Company's "Pleasure Gardens", a piece of art-cum-street theatre which will make its public debut at the 2006 Festival. The image shown here only hints at the magic of this beautiful new creation, but again marks the Festival's commitment to developing the new – and quirky.

The second Henley Festival Extra! has come and gone, and once again everyone at the festival has been struck by the many positives thrown up by this event. Quite apart from offering very solid support to the Kenton Theatre in its 200th centenary year Extra! once again enabled the Festival to showcase extraordinary performers in the kind of performing environment not normally available to us at the Festival proper. However much we may love our floating stage, marquees and temporary venues, the natural acoustics of the Extra! venues provide an entirely different and intimate environment for the likes of jazz guitarist Martin Taylor, clarinettist Emma Johnston, and the surprise hit of the whole week, 'miserable' country and western aficionado, Hank Wangford.

'And what's that' we hear you say 'about Rubbish?'. Well as the photos show, once again Henley's town centre came alive to one of the Festival's more bizarre happenings – two inspired, improvised performances by a team of all-comers and performed on... rubbish; bins, tins, pots, pans and what have you, all master-minded by Drum Pulse activist and motivator Mark Hunter. Aply supported by The Valentinos Street Band, Henley

passers by could not have missed a voluble presence in the town of the Festival, performers having ranged from roughly 3 – 80. Happily that is likely to be the only occasion on which the Henley Festival presents rubbish...



Schools & organisations supported in 2005

Bishopswood Special School Grant towards professionals' fees for a multi-cultural Art and Music week.

Come Together Festival Grant towards the festival on 14th May.

HEDFAS Grant towards visual arts workshops in primary schools.

Henley Youth Festival Grant towards the hire of the Kenton Theatre, sound and lighting and grand piano hire.

Henley-Leichlingen Twinning Association Grant towards the annual orchestra and jazz music exchange programme for young people with Henley's German twin town, in September 2005.

Henley Symphony Orchestra Grant towards the costs of taking the orchestra to Leichlingen in September 2005 to give a concert in celebration of 25 years of town twinning.

Kids @ Art Grant towards two visual arts residencies at Gillotts School and Sacred Heart Primary, Henley.

KT Youth Productions Grant towards the production of 'Les Miserables' at the Kenton Theatre, May 2005.

Nordoff-Robbins Music Therapy Funding to pay for music therapy work with brain-injured attendees at Headway, Townlands Hospital, Henley. This includes finance for a new electric piano.

River & Rowing Museum Grant towards the production of 'Wind in the Willows Live' on 22nd May.

Power Grant towards artists fees and material for a children's workshop.

Langtree Sinfonia Grant towards professional fees for a concert in November.

Henley Art & Craft Guild Grant towards the production of a new arts trail leaflet.

With grateful thanks for the support of our new 'Gold Friends'

Mr Julian Brookes

Mr Michael Jones

Mr Kevin Kingswood

Mr Mike Stubbs

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ENGLISH NATIONAL OPERA & BALLET TICKETS

Take advantage of a special discount scheme for Friends of Henley Festival at the London Coliseum. We have selected five performances in the Spring for you to enjoy.

18 January 2006	<i>The Sleeping Beauty</i>	Tchaikovsky
7 February 2006	<i>The Mikado</i>	Gilbert & Sullivan
1 March 2006	<i>Rigoletto</i>	Verdi
19 April 2006	<i>La Belle Helene</i>	Offenbach
28 April 2006	<i>Orfeo</i>	Monteverdi



See the enclosed booking form for dates and details.

Dates for your diary

HENLEY
Festival



5-9 July 2006

The Friends of Henley Festival Society

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A J Salmon J Smith J R S Voss

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Grant Giving Group: M Beard S Collins A J Salmon J R S Voss

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